



LIFELINK

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A LOOK AHEAD: NEW RESOURCES FOR 2015

Now that the holidays are over, we can look forward to what 2015 has to offer. Navy's Suicide Prevention Branch (OPNAV N171) is committed to providing the fleet with tools to foster the skills needed to navigate life's challenges and be there for *every Sailor, every day*. Here is an overview of some of the new initiatives you can expect this year to help strengthen your local Suicide Prevention Program and build a supportive environment:

- **New Suicide Prevention General Military Training (GMT):** The soon-to-be-released Suicide Prevention GMT is an interactive, scenario-based training designed to generate dialogue about stress navigation, bystander intervention and crisis response. This training features vignettes illustrating realistic situations that Sailors may encounter, better preparing them to “connect the dots” and facilitate the intervention process. Suicide Prevention Coordinators (SPC) will be notified directly when this new training is available on Navy Knowledge Online.
- **Implementing evidence-based intervention tools in the Fleet:** During FY15 Personnel Readiness Summits and other fleet engagements, OPNAV N171 staff will be conducting training for groups in frequent contact with high-risk Sailors on the VA Safety Plan and Columbia Suicide Severity Rating Scale, integrating these two widely utilized evidence-based tools into practice across the fleet.
- **Suicide Prevention Professional Development Training Course for Chaplains:** This year, the Chaplain Corps will be conducting tailored training to enhance their pastoral care skills in suicide prevention, intervention and postvention. Training will focus on evidence-based tools, recognizing indications of suicide risk, ongoing engagement and more, and was developed in conjunction with OPNAV N171 staff. Information is available on www.chaplain.navy.mil.
- **Updated Commanding Officer's Toolkit for Suicide Prevention and Response:** Our revamped toolkit includes key updates to enhance understanding and implementation of OPNAVINST 1720.4a, in order to sustain a robust, sustainable and engaging command-level Suicide Prevention program. Updates will lessen the burden on SPCs and commanders when trying to determine programmatic approaches to training, psychological health promotion, incident reporting, communications alignment and more. This updated product will be available www.suicide.navy.mil in February 2015.
- **Enhanced tracking of Suicide Prevention Coordinator (SPC) webinar training:** OPNAV SPC webinar training can now be documented in FLTMPs! Instructions can be found on the SPC Training Page of www.suicide.navy.mil by clicking [here](#).

In addition to these efforts, Sailors can continue to expect a variety of new and exciting communications and media products, including videos, blog posts, fact sheets and other tools to guide conversation about stress and suicide for *every Sailor, every day*. Happy New Year!



Jeff Bacon Cartoon featured in 2014 "What's Next, Navigating Transitions" series

In case you missed them, here are a few of our favorite blogs, articles and resources from 2014...

3 Things You can do to be there for Every Sailor, Every Day
[Navy.mil](#)

What's Your Plan to Navigate Stress? [NavyNavStress](#)

Postvention is Prevention
[NavyNavStress](#)

Your Navy Chaplain—Focused on Every Sailor, Every Day
[NavyNavStress](#)

Never Walk Alone (series)
[All Hands Magazine](#)

Got Quality Time
[NavyNavStress](#)

5 Things You Should Know About Reducing Access to Lethal Means
suicide.navy.mil

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LIFELINK SPOTLIGHT

Extending “Every Sailor, Every Day” Beyond the Pier

Though change is considered an inevitable part of life, the unknown can be stressful and intimidating. Whether it’s adapting to a new norm in the face of a wound, injury or illness; separation or retirement; gain or loss of a personal relationship; or changing duty stations, each of these transitions provides an opportunity to build resilience. Furthermore, transitions give all of us—as shipmates, leaders, family and community members—a chance to be there for *every Sailor, every day*.

The [Anchor Program](#) within [Navy Wounded Warrior – Safe Harbor](#) is a great example of how shipmates provide support to each other during and beyond transitions. This program pairs wounded, ill or injured Sailors with a Navy sponsor to provide social support as they navigate a challenging time in life: the conclusion of their military careers.

Culinary Specialist 1st Class Jamie Wyckoff serves as a sponsor in the Anchor Program and recently helped a medically separating wounded warrior navigate her transition to civilian life. “She makes me feel like I am still part of the military family, which my husband and I both miss a lot,” says the retired Sailor whom Wyckoff is sponsoring. Wyckoff’s mentee was sexually assaulted a few years ago and later diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder. She was left with a myriad of symptoms including nightmares and anger outbreaks. As a wife and mother of two (including one special needs child), daily responsibilities became tough. Now, as an enrollee in the Anchor Program, her family receives outstanding non-medical care, in addition to ongoing support from Wyckoff. The two enjoy outings together at least once a month and call and text regularly, providing an outlet to talk through worries and stressors while enjoying everyday life.

“Because I’m here solely for her, not for anyone else...she can talk about how she’s feeling openly, and I think that helps a lot,” said Wyckoff in a [related Navy.mil story](#). “Our relationship has opened my eyes...I realize now for some people, just waking up and starting your day can be a process. It’s mind over matter, and sometimes that’s super hard,” she continued.

We can all actively support each other through the small changes or big transitions. By remaining engaged with our shipmates, regardless of their duty status, we can strengthen our connections and be there for *every Sailor, every day*. For more information on this and other Navy Wounded Warrior-Safe Harbor programs, visit safeharbor.navylive.dodlive.mil.

RESILIENCE CORNER

Food Everywhere—Too Many Choices!

Food is often the center of attention during the holidays, and trying to regain a sense of control in the New Year can be tough. Many factors influence your food choices – the food around you, hunger level, boredom, your perception of healthy versus unhealthy food, among many others. This is where ‘mindful eating’ comes into play. You may have heard this phrase, but what exactly does it mean, and what is the benefit to us?



Last year, we discussed mindfulness in the context of stress eating as: “experiencing and being fully aware of what your body is telling you in the present moment.” We live in a society where food is abundant and readily available, so being mindful of our body’s needs for nutrition and our food choices is key to maintain proper nutrition. You can start by creating a healthy eating environment.

If you think back to boot camp or initial officer training, meals were only available at one place, with set menus and times. Now, whether at home, in the office, barracks, or around your ship’s living spaces, your environment is one of the main triggers of your food choices at any given time. If there’s a box of doughnuts in your spaces, you will likely crave it, and if you don’t, then you’ll probably want it anyway just because it’s there. To avoid this common pitfall, ask yourself the following to see how you can improve your eating habits:

- Am I overindulging in food choices and quantities that I do not ordinarily eat because it’s available?
- Do I find myself eating when I’m bored or stressed?
- Am I grazing on food throughout the day without taking the time to taste and enjoy it?
- Am I skipping meals and not paying attention to when I’m really hungry?

If you answered ‘yes,’ to any of these questions, consider re-focusing your intention to eat to nourish your body, enjoy the flavor of your food, and sustain positive energy levels throughout the day. Planning and preparing your meals ahead of time; focusing on healthy whole grains, fruits, and vegetables; keeping food in designated areas; setting meal and snack times and avoid grocery shopping when you are hungry will increase your sense of control-ability and help you sustain positive food choices in the New Year.

For more on Mindful Eating check out Navy and Marine Corps Public Health Center’s [“Eating With Food in Mind”](#) fact sheet.

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UPCOMING EVENTS

Healthy Weight Month (NMCPHC)

January

SPC Basic Training Webinar

January 14 ([register](#))

DCoE Physical Symptoms and Mental Health Webinar

February 26 ([details](#))

Happy New Year!

Contact Navy Suicide Prevention

[Email Us](#) | [Website](#)

Follow Operational Stress Control Online...



PATIENCE: A SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINE

USS Cowpens (CG 63) Chaplain Monya A. Stubbs reflects on the practice of patience to strengthen one's emotional, spiritual and physical well-being in the New Year.

I recently visited with a Buddhist monk, and in our discussion on the concept of patience, he reminded me that patience is not the absence of engagement or an indifferent attitude. Rather, the monk explained, patience means maintaining a commitment to the “causes of your practice, no matter how long it takes to get the results.” I did not really understand, so I asked him to elaborate. “Patience,” he further explained “means sticking with the task – slow and steady.” In other words, I replied, “patience requires endurance.” “No,” he said, “patience is endurance.”

Patience means that we stick with things even when they take a long time to show the preferred results. We do not get frustrated or sloppy. Patience is always efficient, but seldom fast. “A farmer knows,” the monk stated, “that you cannot plant the rice today and expect to have the grains ripened tomorrow.” It takes time and during the time between the planting and the harvest, it is going to require work. We must tend to the soil.

Life can be cruel and sometimes just messy when we are intimidated or stifled by the weight that stress brings into our world. At the same time, life provides us space to create and experience moments of immeasurable joy that enrich the lives of those with whom we work and live. Life offers us a myriad of opportunities to imagine and build products that advance the human condition. Life also pokes and prods, hoping to stimulate us to confront injustices that oppress the human spirit. But, we live in an impatient society; when we engage the opportunities and difficulties that life brings, we are often overwhelmed, irritated, and disappointed if desired outcomes do not come at the pre-determined allotted time. Everything has to be done fast, and we expect fast results. We fail to appreciate the transformative power of patience and endurance.

As we enter this New Year, I invite you to reevaluate your pace. When you engage a problem that comes to your attention, tackle a task placed under your charge, or confront the challenges involved in interpersonal relationships, do so with patience – proceed with care and attention. As you work throughout the year to meet your career goals, to grow your personal relationships, and to strengthen your emotional, spiritual and physical well-being, know that you will encounter obstacles. Do not become discouraged by the natural delays that obstacles bring. Avoid internal dialogues about when the results are going to come, what they are going to be like, and how you can speed up the process. Rather, focus your creative genius on the generosity of the moment and the assignment at hand. Tend to the soil. Be Patient. Endure.

MORE NEWS YOU CAN USE

DCoE Director on Resilience: The Power of Healing, Forgiveness [DCoE Blog](#)

Add Mindfulness to Your Total Fitness Arsenal [HPRC](#)

From Sailor to Civilian and Back [All Hands Magazine](#)

Adaptive Treatment for Wounded, Ill and Injured Sailors and Marines [Navy Medicine Live](#)

Keep Your Eyes on the Fitness Prize [HPRC](#)

New Year, a Renewed Commitment [Navy Wounded Warrior Safe Harbor](#)

DCoE Blog Best of 2014: Posts Worth Re-reading [DCoE Blog](#)

Getting Back in the Black: How to Pay Down Your Holiday Debt [Military OneSource](#)

Resource Spotlight! The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline has launched a microsite for people with lived experience of suicidality. The site includes advice and tips for those coping with past or current suicidal thoughts, as well as members of their support networks (family, therapists, etc.) Visit www.lifelineforattemptsurvivors.org for more information.